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LOS ANGELES TIMES
25 MARCH 1981

Moscow Gaining in Mozambique

S. African Raid, Reagan Policy in El Salvador Give Soviets New Clout

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MAPUTO, Mozambique—Recent events as unrelated as a South African commando raid and President Reagan's declaration of support for the government of El Salvador have combined to present the Soviet Union with the potential for expanding its presence and influence in southern Africa.

This is the view of Western diplomats here who believe that Mozambique's president, Samora Machel, stunned by the ability of a South African force to penetrate 40 miles into his country without challenge by the Mozambican army, is ready to accept greater assistance from Moscow.

The Soviets already have 1,200 people here (about 400 of them military) working with Machel's government. And their Cuban allies here number 1,300, also with about one-third of them in uniform.

It is widely believed among Western observers here that the Cubans, with the concurrence of the Soviets, persuaded Machel to expel four members of the U.S. Embassy, and two American wives, as "spies" earlier this month.

Using their new influence with Machel, it is said, the communists were able to force the departure of the Americans in what is regarded here as retaliation for Reagan's announced determination to end the supply of arms from Cuba to leftist rebels in El Salvador.

The four American embassy staff members, all holding diplomatic rank, were accused of being members of the Central Intelligence Agency. Sources in Washing-

Americans' expulsion followed an attempt to force one to spy for Cuba.

ton acknowledged later that at least one of them was a CIA officer attached to the embassy with what is known as "official cover." Such officers are commonly known to the host government and protected by diplomatic immunity.

The expulsion followed what official Americans described as a "blatant attempt" by Cubans to force one of the four Americans to spy on behalf of Cuba. They are reported to have said to him, "Since you're a Spanish speaker you must have sympathy for us."

The man they confronted, threatened and held for four hours, was Louis L. Olivier. Upon his release, he reported the encounter to his superior. The expulsion order of the four men, and the wives of the two who were married, came within a few hours.

A few days later, foreign correspondents based outside Mozambique were invited to come here to hear confessions by two Mozambican government officials that they spied for the CIA. Also appearing on stage was a Mozambique air force captain who disclosed that he had infiltrated the CIA as a double agent and exposed its operation, even while resisting the wiles of an American female agent.

It was good theater, if perhaps overdone. When asked for concrete evidence of the link to the CIA, reporters were told that it was not possible as the investigation into the spy ring was still incomplete.

Two American civilians, jailed at about the same time the embassy people were expelled, were not presented at the press conference, and have not been allowed to be visited by American officials. The Americans in custody have been named by the Mozambique news agency as Arthur Zimmerman of Findlay, Ohio, a salesman for an American-operated tire manufacturing company here, and Carl Mohrer of Chicago, a biology teacher at the local university.

The South African raid into Mozambique occurred at the end of January but its impact is still felt here, where

Raiders shot up houses used by members of nationalist movement.

there are 4,000 citizens of communist countries in residence as teachers, advisers and aid administrators.

The raiders, however, were after the headquarters of the African National Congress, a black nationalist movement expelled from South Africa and now infiltrating trained saboteurs back into that country.

The organization's staff lived in three houses on the outskirts of Maputo. The houses were shot up by the commandos and 12 of the occupants were killed. The South African invaders, who lost two men in the fight, retired unchallenged by nearby forces of the Mozambique army.

In what at first was considered a reaction warning, four naval vessels from the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean called at Maputo and Beira, farther north. But they did not appear until three weeks after the raid, and it is now generally believed that the visit was routinely scheduled.

For political purposes, however, both Machel and South African Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha chose to interpret the Soviet naval presence as brinksmanship.

Botha, who is in the midst of an election campaign, thundered that the Soviet ships "on the horizon" were further evidence of Moscow's intent to convert southern

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Africa to communism. Machel referred to the crews of the two ships as "comrades in arms."

Machel held a rally in mid-February to further demonstrate his wrath over the raid, saying that he had thrown out all South African businesses from the country. But this was an exaggeration, since South Africans continue to operate the railroad and the port of Maputo, for most of the cargoes moving through the port are South African imports and exports.

Indeed, Mozambique is largely dependent on South Africa, the economic giant that sells food and other essentials to most neighboring black-ruled countries. This brisk trade continues despite the absence of diplomatic relations and the periodic criticism by black leaders of South Africa's discriminatory treatment of its own blacks.

About 40% of Mozambique's foreign exchange is derived from the wages sent home by 35,000 Mozambicans who work in South Africa—mostly in mines, in factories and on farms—and from transport charges paid by South African shippers.

The East European communist bloc countries provide mostly machinery and vehicles intended to help Machel rehabilitate his country, which gained independence from Portugal five years ago after a long armed struggle.

Cuba Provides Manpower

Cubans provide mostly manpower—technicians and teachers—and has been the only communist country to increase its personnel in Mozambique during the past year.

Mozambique is very short of skilled workers. Most of the 90,000 Portuguese fled the country at independence. Partly as a result, the economy floundered, particularly the agricultural sector, which is the country's economic mainstay.

But Machel has worked well with the 15,000 to 20,000 whites who have remained in the country. In his cabinet are 11 black ministers, 7 whites and 3 *mestizos*, persons of mixed race.

Maputo, known during Portuguese rule as Lourenço Marques, remains an attractive city despite its steamy climate. The streets are tree-lined, offering deep shade against the sun. Apartments and houses of the well-to-do are situated to catch the breezes off the Indian Ocean.

But Maputo is overcrowded, for many of its 300,000 people have fled there to escape rural poverty or violence in areas where a tenacious rebel force is fighting Machel's Frelimo political party and army. The insurgency is also fueled by tribalism.

Food is scarce in the city, due to faulty distribution as well as shortages and there are lines throughout the day outside government stores selling rationed foods.

Despite the readiness of communist nations to offer Marxist solutions to his problems, Machel seems hesitant to accept a stronger embrace from Moscow. He is fiercely nationalistic and is said to agree with his friend Robert Mugabe, the prime minister of Zimbabwe, that "communist affection" is not much different from the "Western imperialism."

There are second thoughts within the Machel circle of advisers about whether the expulsion of the American "spies" was wise. It came on the very day that a team from the U.S. Agency for International Development arrived from Washington to explore the possibility of increasing the modest U.S. assistance program. American aid to Mozambique has totaled about \$85 million during the past five years.

After the order came ousting the six Americans, the AID team departed without seeing anybody in the Mozambique government.